

**Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee
(SSTMD AC) Meeting Summary
March 12, 2009**

1, 2, 3. Introductions, Review of February Minutes, Chair's Comments: Members and guests introduced themselves. Minutes from February were approved with one correction suggested by **Andrew Wexler**.

Chair James Polk confirmed that the next meeting will be on April 16 to accommodate the observance of Passover. **Mr. Polk** announced that **Mr. Wexler** will take part in the Pedestrian Safety Audit on March 17 and 18. **Sandra Brecher** is also seeking a volunteer from an employer representative to take part in this audit.

Item 4 -Pedestrian Safety: Bruce Mangum discussed pedestrian safety issues at the intersection at Colesville Road and Georgia Avenue. **Mr. Mangum** explained that while the overall intersection is the responsibility of the State highway Administration (SHA), the County maintains and operates the traffic signal. All physical changes to the intersection must be approved by SHA.

Three proposals have been submitted to SHA to improve pedestrian safety:

- A southbound left turn lane and phase from Georgia to Colesville. **Mr. Mangum** clarified that this was from Southbound Georgia to Northbound Colesville.
- An upgraded accessible pedestrian signal, similar to the signals at Georgia and Ellsworth.
- Revision of phasing from Southbound Colesville to Southbound Georgia. Currently, the left turn arrow on Colesville has a leading phase; e.g. traffic is allowed to turn before the pedestrian walk signal across Georgia is activated. The proposed change would activate the left turn arrow after allowing pedestrians to cross Georgia.

These requests all came about at various times. After some preliminary difficulties, there is now a single design request that encompasses the latter two of these proposals.

Mr. Mangum also stated that the State is rebuilding all the traffic signals from Colesville/Georgia down to East West Highway, and that this work has already started. There will be longer cycles for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic at these intersections.

Mr. Polk asked how signals get coordinated with DC near the border on state roads such as Georgia Avenue. **Mr. Mangum** explained that a lot of progress has been made in coordinating traffic signals with the District.

Mr. Mangum gave some background by recounting the problems people had leaving the District on 9/11. The County had a surveillance camera on Wisconsin Avenue that day, and the main problem was that DC did not have a way of changing the timing of the

signals to accommodate the early release of the DC workforce that day. The end result was similar to a toll gate at the border. Once motorists crossed into Montgomery County, the traffic flowed much faster.

The main concern now when collaborating with the District is coordinating the timing of the cycle lengths. **Mr. Polk** stated that DC allows much longer pedestrian crossing times, but **Mr. Mangum** cautioned that one cannot just look at the countdown timers. **Mr. Polk** was concerned that, in some circumstances, pedestrians were not allowed enough time to cross. **Mr. Mangum** said that with the current standard set at 3.5 feet per second, pedestrians should now have adequate crossing time. The signals are currently timed to get pedestrians all the way across the road with very limited exceptions.

Mel Tull asked if **Mr. Mangum** could give every car exiting the garage on Wayne Avenue a green light during the evening rush hour. As it is now, with the signals phased to favor traffic leaving the district, the garage gets backed up. **Mr. Mangum** acknowledged the difficulty in exiting the garage, but if this request was accommodated, traffic on Georgia Avenue would not move.

Mr. Mangum believes that the Purple Line will present some interesting challenges when it is ultimately completed. As an example, with a light rail system in the middle of a road way, how will left turns for traffic be accommodated?

Mr. Tull suggested perhaps putting marketing signs up to suggest alternative modes of transportation, particularly at congested areas. However, this falls under the jurisdiction of SHA, which has strict rules regarding the placement and type of signs allowed on State roads. Parking garages, on the other hands, may be good place for signs.

Charles Segerman asked whether it was really necessary to keep the 'No Turn On Red' rule at every intersection in the CBD. **Mr. Segerman** stated it can be frustrating sitting at red light well after rush hour, when no pedestrians and no motorists are coming. **Mr. Mangum** answered that this is more of a political issue than an engineering one, and clarified that it came from the Department of Transportation. He stated that the No Turn On Red rule is in force in the County's Central Business Districts, and especially in Silver Spring, to respond to revitalized commercial development. **Mr. Mangum** acknowledged that it can be frustrating to sit at some intersections, but the CBD boundaries are not always drawn with precision with regard to where pedestrian or vehicle traffic will always be at its highest.

Item 5 - SHA Response to Inquiry re: Colesville / Georgia: **Jim Carlson** pointed out the email response from **Anyesha Mookherjee**, SHA Engineering, attached to members' packets.

The email reiterates that the left turn phasing for southbound Colesville is under review. It is anticipated that the current "lead" phasing (where left turns start before opposing through traffic) will be changed to "lag" phasing (allowing left turns after the opposing through traffic). Construction is set to begin July 1, 2009.

Item 6 - Updates—TMD/DOT/Police/Other Updates: **Sgt. Tom Harmon** debriefed the committee on recent citation data and discussed other priority items. One of these is the Street Smart Campaign, which will go from March 23-April 19. The primary focus will be on pedestrian safety, but will involve both drivers and pedestrians.

Jim Carlson announced that a new Traffic Mitigation Plan Annual Report [correction: Traffic Mitigation Plan only] was submitted online, using DOT's new online submittal system. The company is Think Tank, Inc., located at 8601 Georgia Ave. **Mr. Carlson** stated that Think Tank is fulfilling all of the required elements of the TMP, plus some optional strategies:

- Plan to provide bike racks
- Provide parking for carpools
- Provide Flex time, compressed schedules, and provide telework options.

The committee recommended approval of the Think Tank TMP. Motion was offered, seconded and approved.

Mr. Carlson announced that in the Annual Commuter Survey will be distributed within the next 4-6 weeks. Ideally, all companies will respond. Ultimately, the goal is to send and receive all surveys electronically.

Sandra Brecher added that these surveys are very important for the Commuter Services, since they provide a key method of measuring the effectiveness of its programs. For example, the TMD has a mode share goal of 46 percent; or, in other words, 46 percent of people who commute during peak periods should be using methods of transport other than a single occupancy vehicle.

Ms. Brecher announced that CSS will be at the Go Green Expo on March 28 and 29 at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds.

Ms. Brecher stated that CSS is exploring the use of an e-newsletter. It would be very brief, and perhaps once every two months.

One recent news item that would fit into one of these e-news bulletins would be the recent increase in the Federal tax-free transit fringe benefit included in President Obama's economic stimulus package – from \$120/mo. to \$230/mo. For the first time, this brings the transit benefit into parity with the parking benefit. This legislation does expire at the end of 2010, so employers need to know about it.

Meeting adjourned at 9:35
Next meeting date: April 16, 2009

Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee (SSTMD AC)
Attendance Sheet
March 12, 2009

Voting Members (12)			
Name	Affiliation	Present	Absent
Chamber Members (3)			
Samantha Mazo	Linowes and Blocher LLP		X
James S. Polk, Chairman	Technology Service Corporation	X	
Tom Collins	Atlantech Online	X	
Citizens Advisory Board Members (3)			
Edward Furgol	Kemp Mill, Four Corners, East SS	X	
Charles Segerman, Vice Chairman	North & West Sector Plan Area	X	
Andy Wexler	CBD Resident	X	
TMD Employers less than 50 employees (3)			
Julian Leidman (pending replacement)	Small Business Representative		X
Suvita Melehy	Melehy & Associates		X
Cathy Wilde	Solid Waste Assoc of North America	X	
TMD Employers with 50 or more employees (3)			
G. Michael Price	Discovery Communications	X	
Robin Goudy	Social & Scientific Systems		X
Vacant			
Non-Voting Members (4)			
Sandra Brecher, DOT Transit Services	DOT Director or Designee	X	
Chuck Kines	M-NCPPC		X
Sergeant Thomas Harmon	Montgomery County Police	X	
Staff			
Terrie O'Steen	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
David Kantor	DOT, Commuter Services		X
Jim Carlson	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
Guests			
Michael Dees	Hines GS	X	
Bruce Mangum	DOT, Traffic Engineering	X	
Mel Tull	SS Regional Services Center	X	